



Baptist Churches
of NSW & ACT

Code of Ethics & Conduct

Updated 2019

REVISED CODE OF ETHICS & CONDUCT 2019

(As Approved by the Assembly Council on the 8th of August 2017
and Endorsed at the Annual Assembly on the 17th of May 2018
with final structural amendments approved by Assembly Council 12th March 2019)

This document is a revision of and replacement for
the previous Code of Ethics & Conduct as approved by
the Assembly of the Baptist Union of NSW and ACT, April 2015.

PREAMBLE FOR GEORGES RIVER LIFE CHURCH

The Baptist Association of NSW and ACT adopted a Code of Ethics and Conduct (“the Code”) to outline the responsibilities of Pastoral Staff and their duty of care towards those they lead and work with. The Pastoral Leaders at Georges River Life Church (GRLC) have accepted the Code as required by the Association and are expected to comply with the Code in its entirety.

The following modifications provide a dual accountability for **Accredited and Recognised ministers** under the Code to both the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT AND Georges River Life Church.

1. The following terms wherever they appear in the Code are replaced as follows:
 - a. “the BA NSW & ACT” is replaced with the words “the BA NSW & ACT AND GRLC”.
 - b. “Baptist Association of NSW & ACT” is replaced with the words “Baptist Association of NSW & ACT AND GRLC”.
 - c. “the Baptist Association’s Team Leader - Operations, or Director of Ministries” in Clause 12.2 is replaced with the words “the Baptist Association’s Team Leader - Operations, or Director of Ministries AND the GRLC Church Leadership Team”.
 - d. “Baptist Policy” is replaced with the words “Baptist Policy AND GRLC Policy”.

GRLC has adopted and extended the operation of the Code, whereby the term “pastoral leader” refers to all GRLC staff; both paid and unpaid, including non-pastoral staff and interns; who must accept the Code subject to the modifications below. The following modifications remove aspects of the Code not directly relevant to staff who are **neither Accredited nor Recognised ministers**.

2. The following sections are excluded:
 - a. Sections 6.3 and 6.3.1 Participation in BA Continuing Ministerial Development Process.
 - b. Section 7.4.8 Separation and Divorce notification requirements.
 - c. Section 9.4 Handling of money (Enable Stream exempt).
 - d. Section 10.1.2 Contact with Leadership of Transferring Person’s Previous Congregation
 - e. Sections 10.3.1, 10.4 and 10.4.1
 3. The following terms wherever they appear in the Code are replaced as follows:
 - a. “the BA NSW & ACT” is replaced with the word “GRLC”.
 - b. “Baptist Association of NSW & ACT” is replaced with the word “GRLC”.
 - c. “the Baptist Association’s Team Leader - Operations, or Director of Ministries” in Clause 12.2 is replaced with the words “GRLC Church Leadership Team”.
 - d. “Baptist Policy” is replaced with the words “GRLC Policy”.
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CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Code of Ethics and Conduct – NSW/ACT Baptist Ministers

The need for a Code of Ethics for NSW/ACT Baptist pastors has been apparent for some years. In June 2003 a Code was drafted and adopted by the then NSW Baptist Ministers' Association, but did not proceed to Assembly, due to a desire by the Ministers' Association that it be proceeded with only if a Church's Code of Conduct was developed¹. From 2006, the Pastoral Development Taskforce (PDT) [now known as the Pastoral Advisory Group 2014] of the Ministry Support and Development (MSD) team was charged with the responsibility of advising on and overseeing the development of policies and procedures to support pastoral health and well-being for NSW/ACT pastoral leaders. With the appointment of a Professional Standards Unit and Professional Standards Unit Manager (2013), and a review of the Accreditation Process for Ministers (2014), this significant lack of an approved Code of Conduct for Ministers' for the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT was once again highlighted, and addressed in conjunction with the Pastoral Advisory Taskforce (PAT) and MSD.

The Code of Ethics and Conduct will from this point be referred to as *The Code*.

The establishment of a Code is a recognised practice that has been undertaken by other Baptist Unions in Australia and various other denominations in recent years. The Code's drafting group drew on material from these codes.

A Draft was circulated to pastors and church leaders in January 2015. Feedback was received and considered.

The Code reflects an ongoing commitment by the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT to:

- the maturity, health and professional conduct of its pastoral leaders and the churches to which they minister;
- its responsibility to make clear the duty of care that pastoral leaders have towards those they lead and work with.

The Code is **not** intended to replace other official documents prepared by the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT but should be read in conjunction with them. These include but are not limited to:

- Statement of Beliefs as found in the Constitution
- Safe Church Policy
- Complaint Procedure for Allegations of Misconduct by Pastoral leaders
- Continuing Ministerial Development and Recognition Guidelines
- Privacy Policy of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT

The Code is **not** intended to replace a *Covenant of Care* document established between a Pastoral Leader and their congregation at the commencement of a period of ministry but should be read in conjunction with the Covenant.

The Code aims to provide Pastoral leaders (and their churches) with clear guidelines and common benchmarks for ethical conduct and legal responsibility. *It is not designed to be a replacement for the Bible as a fundamental guide for faith and practice.* It recognises however, that a diversity of scriptural interpretation exists among Baptists.

Nor is the Code intended to be an exhaustive 'How to' manual for ministry. It does seek to reflect the biblical call to godliness and faithfulness in ministry.

1. "There was concern that if such a code was developed, there also ought to be a similar document for churches. The Ministers Association has therefore agreed that this Code of Conduct of Ministers, although adopted by the Association for its members, be not presented to Assembly until a code of conduct for churches be simultaneously presented." June 2003 *Baptist Ministers' Association Code of Conduct*, page 1.

Several of the Code's principles are **aspirational**: pastoral leaders will endeavour to fulfill them to the best of their ability. Several are **advisable**: guidelines that are strongly recommended; and other principles are **mandatory**: failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action being taken by the BA NSW & ACT, and/or removal from the official list of pastors. (Make clear which sections are which).

Those sections which the Association considers mandatory and subject to potential disciplinary action are clearly labeled **MANDATORY**.

MANDATORY sections are highlighted in a black box.

The document titled Procedures for Handling Allegations Brought Against Accredited (or Recognised) Ministers outlines the process undertaken when misconduct occurs.

The Code is an open document that will be reviewed from time to time by the BANSW & ACT Pastoral Advisory Group in consultation with the Professional Standards Unit.

Pastoral leaders include the following people associated with the Baptist Association:

- Ordained and Accredited Pastoral leaders;
- Recognised Pastoral leaders (non-ordained but accredited);
- Accreditation Candidates in Training;
- All persons employed by the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT in leadership roles to do with church or pastoral ministry
- Anyone who is registered as a marriage celebrant with the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT.

Preamble

Pastoral leaders are called by God, affirmed by the Church and usually trained in a professional manner.

People enter into ministry in response to a gracious call from God and the

Church. It is this call that requires Pastoral leaders to carry out their responsibilities in a biblically faithful manner. As Scripture says: "See to it that you fulfill the ministry that you have received from the Lord" (Col 4:17). Pastoral leaders have been given a significant role within the life of the Church. They are called upon to exercise leadership in its worship, preaching, mission, pastoral care and discipleship; they also serve as Christ's representatives in the world (Matt 28:18-20). As Pastoral leaders live out their call to ministry in positions of power and influence, they will seek to express the love and character of Christ in all their relationships.

Pastoral leaders within the churches of the Baptist Association of NSW/ACT also exercise ministry under the auspices and affirmation of that Association. Accredited and Recognised Ministers are thus accountable to work within the values and standards espoused by the Association i.e. contained within the Constitution, the Accreditation Guidelines and the Statement of Beliefs.

Finally, bearing as they do a call to reach the wider community and operate within the appropriate laws of the State (Romans 13:1-7), pastoral leaders will operate with the highest professional commitment to these laws. While pastors are not mere "professionals", they will behave "professionally".

This Code is thus informed by biblical, Associational and professional standards.

- 1. Pastoral leaders must exercise ministry within the limits of their expertise, and within the parameters of the Code of Ethics & Conduct for Pastoral Leaders.**
 - 1.1** Pastoral leaders must uphold professional standards of ministry, outlined in this Code
 - 1.1.1** Pastoral leaders exercise a role in society that carries respect. Thus they should act in a way that maintains the trust of the community. The nature of ministry requires pastoral leaders to be godly, healthy and humble examples to others.
 - 1.2** Pastoral leaders should seek to minister with an attitude worthy of their call.
 - 1.2.1** Pastoral leaders touch people's lives in times of joy, pain, celebration, grief and vulnerability. They train the church to serve the Lord in caring for one another, praying, studying the Scriptures, and proclaiming the Gospel. They seek to enable others to grow in Christian maturity (Colossians 1:28) and to focus on God as the source of forgiveness, restoration and wholeness.
 - 1.3** Pastoral leaders must ensure that they act responsibly and with integrity towards others.
 - 1.3.1** Pastoral leaders exercise considerable influence and power. Therefore they must act at all times with integrity and maintain appropriate boundaries in their relationships.
 - 1.3.2** Pastoral leaders should recognise that they are not called to carry out their responsibilities alone. Therefore, they will be readily accountable to and seek support from others including their local church, its leadership group; colleagues, peer support group, mentor, professional supervisor and/or spiritual director as well as the BA NSW & ACT.
 - 1.3.3** Pastoral leaders should seek to encourage the members of their congregations to exercise their own gifts and capacity for ministry and service in the church and society.
 - 1.4** Pastoral leaders should not offer unqualified advice in areas for which they do not hold credentials.
 - 1.4.1** Professionals are expected to act within the scope of their profession. A 'profession' is a group of people engaged in an occupation or calling whose competency depends upon specialised knowledge, training and experience. Any service that is offered beyond the scope of the profession of Christian ministry must be accompanied by appropriate and recognised qualifications.
 - 1.4.2** Pastoral leaders are not normally trained to provide services such as specialised Counselling or Psychological Analysis or other areas requiring specific training and qualifications.
 - 1.4.3** Most professions have their own codes of ethical standards. When pastoral leaders are offering a service from a particular profession (for example, Counselling or Psychology), they must also observe the code of ethics attached to that profession.
 - 1.4.4** Where pastoral leaders are in any doubt about their ability or qualifications to offer a service to a person in their care, they should refer the person to a qualified professional.

2. Pastoral leaders must treat those to whom they minister, and all with whom they come into contact, with respect, honesty and compassion.

- 2.1** Pastoral leaders should be an example of Christ-like behaviour to the members of both the church and the community.
- 2.2** Pastoral leaders should respect the dignity of others regardless of race, religion, gender, political beliefs, ability or sexual orientation.
- 2.3** Pastoral leaders should work to further justice in society.
 - 2.3.1** Pastoral leaders should recognise the church's concern for all aspects of life and society.

2.4 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders are to have a moral and biblical commitment to truthfulness, and must not knowingly represent other's work as their own.

3. MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must be aware that there is a power dynamic within their role, power that must not be abused but understood and exercised appropriately.

- 3.1** Abuse of power is when someone with authority uses that authority to unjustifiably exploit or harm others or through lack of action allows exploitation or harm to others.

It is possible for a Pastor to wrongly use their age, intelligence, Bible knowledge, position in church governance, physical presence, technology, confidential information, trust or other means to abuse the power they have been given. Abuse of power can be blatant or subtle in its expression.

Examples of abuse can include, but are not limited to:

- a. using confidential knowledge of a person's life situation in open prayers or sermon illustrations,
- b. using superior Bible knowledge to subtly manipulate others to do what you want them to do or to shame them in front of others,
- c. using your position of authority to coerce people to gift money or items to you as the Pastor
- d. favouring some people's requests over others for their own gain

- 3.2** Pastoral leaders must acknowledge that in being called to pastor a church they are being placed in a position of authority within that church. With that authority comes the responsibility to exercise it in a way consistent with a follower of Jesus – in humility, servanthood, honesty and love.

4 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must refrain from any form of conduct that exploits another for their own advantage, or the advantage of any third person.

- 4.1** Pastoral leaders must not spiritually, emotionally, verbally, physically or sexually abuse anyone.
- 4.1.1** Pastoral leaders should recognise the influence that they exercise in their ministerial roles. They must refrain from the abuse of the power that is possible in their role. The pastor's influence needs to be exercised wisely to sustain and build up the church, never to bully, manipulate or denigrate.
- 4.1.2** Pastoral leaders have the responsibility to ensure that their churches are places of safety where the personal boundaries of those within their care will not be violated.
- 4.1.3** Pastoral leaders must refrain from sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of any kind. Sexual misconduct includes:
- a. Sexual harassment: a wide range of unwelcome and unreciprocated behaviours, verbal and physical such as overt or covert seductive speech or gestures, the display of offensive pictures, unwelcome sexual advances or unwelcome requests or demands for sexual favours or engagement in other unwelcome contact of a sexual nature. Such contact may include expressions of inappropriate 'affection' such as unwelcome kissing, touching, patting, pinching or bumping;
 - b. Sexual assault: any unwelcome sexual behaviour that may occur along a continuum from verbal insult to sexual intercourse that makes a person feel threatened or afraid;
 - c. Sexual conduct prohibited by criminal law.
- 4.2** Pastoral leaders must not engage in a sexual relationship with anyone other than their spouse.
- 4.2.1** The expected standard is celibacy for single pastors.
- 4.2.2** Pastoral leaders must not sexualise a pastoral or professional relationship. Sexualisation includes sexual interaction, consensual or otherwise with a person within their ministerial care; apart from behaviour mentioned under 4.1.3, such interaction may also include unwarranted or inappropriate questioning of another's sexual history.
- 4.2.3** In the event of a single pastor engaging in a courting relationship with a member of their congregation suitable accountability must be maintained.
- 4.3** Pastoral leaders must not seek material gain for themselves or their families from a pastoral relationship, beyond recognised fees, stipends and entitlements.

5. Pastoral leaders must respect the right of all to whom they minister, to a relationship of mutual trust, privacy and confidentiality.

5.1 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must maintain confidentiality unless this would result in harm to another person(s) or disclosure is required by law.

5.1.1 In the context of a pastoral relationship, confidentiality is an assurance that pastoral leaders will not divulge written or spoken information about an individual with other people unless:

- a.** Permission has been granted by the individual;
- b.** Retaining such information would result in physical, emotional or sexual harm to another person(s);
- c.** Disclosure is required by law or is necessary to prevent financial loss to some other person due to fraud or other dishonesty where undue hardship might result.

5.1.2 Pastoral leaders should not seek to gain sensitive or confidential material to which they are not entitled or which would require another person to breach a confidence.

5.1.3 Pastoral leaders must take care to discuss the nature and limits of their confidentiality with those receiving counselling.

5.1.4 Pastoral leaders must ensure that confidential records are securely stored; that rooms in which pastoral conversations take place are appropriately private.

5.1.5 Staff members are to be informed of their duty in matters of confidentiality.

5.2 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must not disclose private or confidential material in public unless prior consent has been given.

5.2.1 Pastoral leaders should not use information or stories from pastoral conversations in their preaching and public prayers that would reveal a person's identity except with their permission. Even then, it may be inappropriate to reveal such information:

- a.** In deference to relatives of the person who may recognise the person(s) involved;
- b.** Because some people relish personal information about themselves being broadcast;
- c.** Because it may discourage sensitive people from seeking help if they fear that inappropriate disclosure may be made about them.

5.3 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must comply with the provisions of the Privacy Act.

5.4 Pastoral leaders are to be discerning in their use of social media. Online communications can create an intense, relational situation because of the ease of access, the comfort of distance and its unobserved nature. The church considers talking with people online to be exactly the same as talking to them face to face and the same Code of Ethics and Conduct applies.

6. Pastoral leaders must commit themselves to ongoing personal and professional development.

6.1 Pastoral leaders should maintain professional standards of knowledge and skill in areas of ministry relevant to their context.

6.1.1 A Pastoral Leader's professional conduct is enhanced by disciplined and prayerful reflection on the various ways in which the Christian faith affects the lives of the people within their care.

6.2 Pastoral leaders should seek to contribute to the development of the wider ministry.

6.2.1 Pastoral leaders are encouraged to share their professional knowledge and experience with ministerial colleagues and to contribute their expertise and experience to the development of the BA NSW & ACT's ministry, policies and practice.

6.3. MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must actively participate in the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT's Continuing Ministerial Development process (previously known as Continuing Accreditation Process).

6.3.1 The Baptist Association of NSW & ACT's Continuing Ministerial Development process provides an opportunity for pastoral leaders to review their sense of call on a regular basis and renew their response to it. The CMD ensures that provision is made for the establishment and continuation of mentoring and supervisory relationships that will support pastoral leaders in their ministries. The CMD includes accountability for matters of personal, spiritual, and professional growth and study. Pastoral leaders who wish to remain on the BA NSW & ACT's recognised ministerial lists are required to participate in the Ongoing Ministerial Development process.

7. Pastoral leaders must accept responsibility for their own spiritual, emotional, physical and mental health, and act with due care towards their families and friends.

7.1 Pastoral leaders should nurture their spiritual lives through regular attention to prayer, the reading of scripture and other spiritual disciplines.

7.1.1 Pastoral leaders should recognise that fruitful ministry is an expression and extension of a dependent relationship upon God.

7.2 Pastoral leaders should seek to maintain a proper balance between personal, family, church and other responsibilities.

7.2.1 Some pastoral leaders will face the temptation of being consumed by the ministerial role; others will struggle to give adequate attention to ministerial priorities.

7.2.2 Personal wellbeing is enhanced by good friendships. It is desirable for Pastoral leaders to develop and maintain personal friendships with people outside the sphere of their ministerial responsibilities.

7.3 Pastoral leaders should seek to manage their time wisely and should set aside regular opportunities for rest, recreation and spiritual renewal.

7.3.1 It is desirable for Pastoral leaders to establish viable work patterns that include weekly time (Sabbath) away from pastoral responsibilities and regular scheduled holiday breaks and/or annual leave.

- 7.4** Pastoral leaders should fulfill their responsibilities of love and care for their spouses and families, and avoid imposing unreasonable expectations and demands upon them.
- 7.4.1** Pastoral leaders should allow adequate time to fulfill their family responsibilities.
- 7.4.2** Pastoral leaders should exercise fidelity and integrity in their relationships to their spouses (partners).
- 7.4.3** You will not condone or participate in domestic or family violence which involves violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour carried out by a partner carer or family member to control, dominate or instil fear. This includes physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial or other types of abuse
- 7.4.4** Pastoral leaders should encourage their loved ones to grow in faith. This may mean that Pastoral leaders will ensure that someone else has the responsibility for the pastoral care of family members.
- 7.4.5** Pastoral leaders should respect the rights of their family members to privacy and refrain from making public references to them without first seeking their permission.
- 7.4.6** The responsibility of a Pastoral Leader's spouse is as a marital partner and, where, applicable, as a co-parent to the children, not as a church employee or unpaid leader (unless this arrangement has been made with the free consent of the spouse). A spouse should be able to choose the nature of their involvement in the life of the congregation (like any other church member).

7.4.7 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders who are experiencing difficulties in their marriage relationship should seek professional help at the earliest opportunity and consult with a senior colleague, mentor or peer group for advice and support.

7.4.8 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders who permanently separate or divorce their spouse are required to promptly notify the Committee for the Ministry.

- 7.4.9** It would normally be advisable for a pastoral leader experiencing a marriage separation to take some time off from normal pastoral duties to manage their spiritual, emotional, physical and mental health.
- 7.4.10** In the event of a marriage separation pastoral leaders should endeavour to treat their former spouse, and children of that partnership, with dignity and respect, and to comply with any associated court orders or agreements.
- 7.5.** Pastoral leaders should seek to maintain their own physical and mental health.
- 7.5.1** Physical health requires proper nutrition, adequate sleep, regular exercise and avoidance of the misuse of alcohol and other drugs. A regular (annual) health check with a medical practitioner is advisable.

7.5.2 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders will refrain from engaging in or condoning the production, distribution and possessing of in print, electronic or other forms sexually explicit or pornographic material.

It is inappropriate for Pastoral leaders to access any type of pornographic material. Pastoral leaders who struggle with this addiction should seek professional help.

7.5.3 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders who experience personal difficulties with addictive forms of behaviour should seek professional help at the earliest opportunity and consult with a senior colleague, mentor or peer group for advice and support.

8. Pastoral leaders must avoid entering into relationships or situations that may diminish their ability to maintain professional integrity and independence.
 - 8.1 Pastoral leaders have a responsibility to discern situations in which their ability to provide proper pastoral care may be compromised, and to act appropriately.
 - 8.1.1 Because pastoral leadership occurs within a caring community, close friendships may develop with some members of the church community. At times the nature of these relationships may challenge the capacity of pastoral leaders to provide appropriate care. Such relationships may include: special friendships that may reasonably be construed by others as evidence of partiality or conflict of interest; and relationships that are becoming romanticised. Pastoral leaders have a responsibility to discern such developments and take appropriate action such as:
 - a. Disengaging from the pastoral relationship and arranging alternative pastoral care for the person(s) in question;
 - b. Seeking advice from a supervisor, mentor or senior colleague.
 - 8.2 Pastoral leaders should exercise caution and discretion when entering into contracts or commercial arrangements with people to whom they minister.
 - 8.3 Pastoral leaders should exercise caution and discretion concerning the acceptance of gifts as a result of their ministry.
 - 8.3.1 Pastoral leaders should take into account the intent and value of the gift, and the possibility of being unduly compromised or influenced by such a gift. Where pastoral leaders accept a gift to satisfy certain cultural traditions, they should consider using the gift for the benefit of the wider community of faith.
 - 8.4 Pastoral leaders will acquaint themselves with the concept of “conflict of interest” and will declare such conflicts when they become aware of them.
 9. **Pastoral leaders must maintain integrity and exercise faithful stewardship in managing finances.**
 - 9.1 Pastoral leaders must manage their personal finances ethically and should seek to do so wisely.
 - 9.1.1 Pastoral leaders should set an example of stewardship by seeking to live within their means and practising generosity, as they are able.
 - 9.1.2 Pastoral leaders should be scrupulously honest in their private management of money. This includes seeking to pay bills in a timely manner and acting with integrity in matters of taxation.

9.1.3 Pastoral leaders should avoid participating in artificial tax minimization schemes and claiming unwarranted expense deductions. Integrity means managing personal financial affairs in such a way that Pastoral leaders would not be embarrassed by such affairs being made public.

9.1.4 Pastoral leaders may supplement their stipend through other employment. It is good practice to discuss with the church how other employment will impact on the Pastoral Leader's availability and ministry. Pastoral leaders should not take up employment that threatens their integrity or the good name of the Church.

9.2 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must not use Church funds, accounts or resources for private advantage, unless there is an appropriate arrangement made in agreement with the church leadership, and the arrangement is disclosed to and approved by the congregation.

9.2.1 Churches have a responsibility to ensure that Pastoral leaders, as employees, receive a fair wage for their labour and that agreed ministry related expenses are reimbursed. Pastoral leaders must ensure that reimbursements for ministry related expenses are supported by appropriate documentation. Pastoral leaders should ensure that church funds and their personal money are kept separate.

9.2.2 At the conclusion of a ministry within a church Pastoral leaders should return to the church any properties or material belonging to the church

9.2.3 Pastors and their families should show due respect in the use and maintenance of any church provided accommodation, especially long term use of a manse.

9.3 Pastoral leaders should not charge church members for pastoral services.

9.3.1 Pastoral leaders must obtain the support of the church body employing them before accepting remuneration beyond that agreed in their Statement of Understanding.

9.3.2 Where Pastoral leaders receive fees or honoraria for ministry activities conducted within the usual bounds of their work, these should be passed on to the Church.

9.3.3 Pastoral leaders should not normally accept fees or honoraria for weddings and funerals from church members.

9.4 Pastoral leaders should refrain from direct involvement in the collection, counting and handling of money received by the church.

9.4.1 Pastoral leaders are often the recipients of a significant proportion of a church's funds as stipends. It is therefore good practice for them to remain "at arms length" from the handling of monies received by the church, so as to avoid any perceived conflict of interest. Pastoral leaders should encourage churches to implement generally accepted accounting practices and internal controls.

10. Pastoral leaders must treat all colleagues in ministry with respect, consideration and fairness.

10.1 Pastoral leaders must refrain from any communication that may needlessly damage the reputation of colleagues.

10.1.1 MANDATORY

Pastoral leaders must refrain from gossip, slander and other communication (both written and spoken) that is false, degrading, defamatory or harmful to another's character or reputation.

10.1.2 When a person transfers from another congregation it is good practice for the Pastoral Leader of the receiving congregation to contact the leadership of the previous church to ensure that they are aware of the move and to ascertain if there are any issues to be aware of. Where a person is under discipline from a congregation, another church should receive them into fellowship only if they have ensured that the relevant matters have been dealt with as far as possible. An effort should be made to assist people to resolve conflicts with other believers.

10.2 Pastoral leaders should not proselytise members of other congregations and should exercise discretion in rendering pastoral service to a member of another congregation.

10.3 Pastoral leaders should not determine the selection of a successor and must not interfere in the ministry of their successor/s, however, where appropriate they might be involved in succession planning and transition.

10.3.1 Upon conclusion of a ministry, pastoral leaders should normally seek membership in a different congregation from the one in which they have been serving. Participation in activities such as weddings and funerals would normally take place with the agreement of the current Pastoral leadership.

10.3.2 Pastoral leaders are strongly advised not to interfere in the ministry of their successors and should use discretion and wisdom in particular in the level and nature of their involvement in the successor selection process. Please refer to the Association Guidelines for pastors who remain in the congregation.

10.3.3 Interim pastoral leaders must recognise the temporary nature of their tenure and not encourage the development of personal loyalties that may hinder the congregation in the process of calling and installing a new Pastoral Leader.

10.4 Pastoral leaders must not consider a call to a church to replace a current pastor who has not resigned or been removed.

10.4.1 Pastoral leaders should not establish a new work within close geographical proximity of another Baptist church without appropriate consultation with any local Baptist churches and the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT.

11. Pastoral leaders should respect the doctrinal basis, values and policies as expressed in the Constitution of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT and must work within its officially recognised guidelines.

11.1 Pastoral leaders should contribute to the wider life of the denomination, participating as they are able in its assemblies, ministries and organisations.

11.2 Pastoral leaders should encourage the congregation in which they are serving to participate in the fellowship of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT.

11.2.1 Pastoral leaders should report accurately and fairly the processes and decisions of Assemblies and other Church councils to the congregation and its leadership.

11.3 Pastoral leaders should refrain from any public communication that aims to damage the reputation and unity of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT.

11.3.1 Pastoral leaders should respect the due processes of the Association in matters of decision-making and change. When they disagree with a decision or policy of the Assembly or its councils, they should work through established procedures to express their point of view.

12. Pastoral Leaders must act lawfully at all times, unless to do so would clearly contravene Christian principles or good conscience.

12.1 Pastoral leaders should promote adherence to the law within the sphere of their ministerial responsibilities.

12.1.1 Pastoral leaders are members of society and therefore subject to the laws of the State. They should seek to be good citizens as a commendation of the Gospel.

12.1.2 Pastoral leaders who intend to break the law or engage in civil disobedience must be prepared to face the consequences of their actions.

12.1.3 Pastoral leaders who engage in acts of civil disobedience should not behave in a violent or harmful manner.

12.2 Pastoral leaders must inform the Baptist Association's Team Leader - Operations, or Director of Ministries of any matter which may lead to legal action against the Minister, Association or Church.

12.3 Pastoral leaders must not encourage others to break the law except in instances where that may be required by Christian principles or good conscience.

12.3.1 Pastoral leaders should not coerce others to join them in acts of civil disobedience or law breaking, but should recognise and respect the right of individuals to make free choices. In calling for or encouraging such actions, they should make clear the possible consequences.

Affirmation and Consent by Pastors:

While being employed as a pastor within the terms of this document, I do hereby

- **accept** the Code of Ethics and Conduct and the related Standards Units Policies and Procedures documents;
- **give consent** to this procedure being followed in the event that a formal complaint is laid against me;
- **agree** to co-operate with any investigation that is set up in accordance with this document and or/Baptist Policy;
- **agree** to attend and take part in any rehabilitation process recommended from these guidelines.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

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